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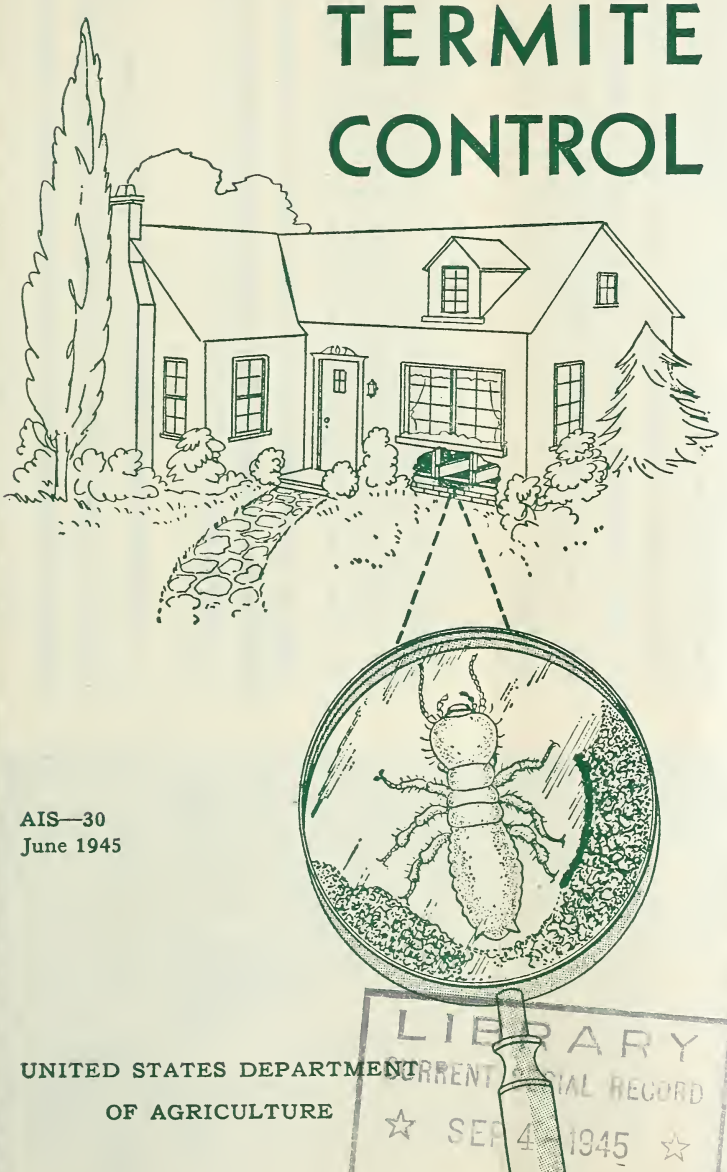
SOIL TREATMENT
an aid in
TERMITE CONTROL



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
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The basis for termite control in a building is to break the contact between the termite colony in the soil and the woodwork. Every case of termite trouble requires individual treatment. The suggestions given in this pamphlet apply to soil treatment alone. Soil treatment provides a satisfactory remedy for 5 years or more, but is not a permanent preventive measure. Such treatment should be used as an alternative to making structural repairs, which give more lasting protection.

PENTACHLOROPHENOL is one of the best of many chemicals tested for treating soil against termites. It may be purchased as a white crystalline material or in solution under several trade names. The crystals may be dissolved in an oil such as fuel oil or waste crankcase oil. Three gallons of oil will dissolve about 1 pound of the crystals to make a 5-percent solution, which is the strength to use. Where difficulty is experienced in getting the crystals into solution, add a small amount of a better solvent such as pine oil. Proprietary solutions should be diluted to 5 percent if they are purchased in more concentrated form.

COAL-TAR CREOSOTE is less expensive and can be used when odor or discoloration are not factors to be considered. One part of creosote may be diluted with one or two parts of fuel oil or waste crankcase oil and used in that form.

Don't treat the soil when it is water-soaked.

CLOTHESLINE POSTS, as well as other posts or poles of untreated wood, may be protected by using soil poisons. However, such protection is not equivalent to that obtained by using pressure-treated wood. A suitable procedure for treating the soil about a post is shown in the illustrations above. Remove the damaged post and enlarge the hole so that it is about 4 inches larger than the post to be planted. Pour a small amount of pentachlorophenol solution or coal-tar creosote into the bottom of the hole and insert the post. Alternate applications of soil and chemical. Mix and tamp well each lot of soil and chemical as the hole around the post is being filled. Finish the treatment by pouring a small amount of the chemical around the base of the post. Two quarts of chemical is enough to treat the soil around each post.

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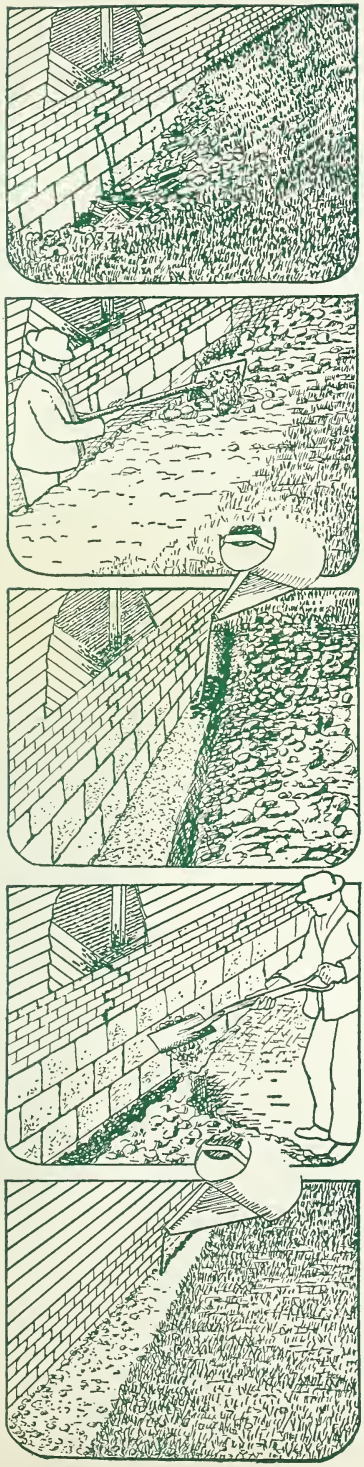

TELLTALE SIGNS OF SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES are the earthen tunnels or runways built by these insects over the surfaces of foundation walls to reach the wood above. When feeding in wood, the pearly white worker termites make galleries that follow the grain. Termites do not push out sawdustlike material from their galleries. These galleries seldom show on the wood surface, but may be found by removing weatherboarding or trim boards or by probing with an ice pick or a knife the places where you think the insects are at work. Another sign of termites is the swarming of winged adults early in the spring. Each adult has four silvery wings, which are of equal length and twice as long as the body. Numerous detached wings may be found where swarming has taken place even after the swarm has disappeared.

RELIEF FROM SUCH TERMITES can be had by chemical treatment of the soil. Where the infestation occurs along the exterior basement wall, dig a narrow trench about 2½ feet deep to expose the wall. Extend the trench along the wall at least 4 or 5 feet in each direction from the termite runways. If shrubbery is present, line the side of the trench next to the shrubbery roots with tar paper or asphalt paper. If the infestation is within an unexcavated or partly excavated area, a shallow trench is sufficient along the foundation wall or supporting pillars. Sometimes treatment of both sides of the wall is necessary.

If tubes or other signs of termites appear on the basement side of the foundation wall, locate and seal with concrete, coal-tar pitch, or plastic cement, the cracks or other openings through which the termites have entered. If the tubes come through the wall below the bottom of the trench, either dig it deeper or punch holes in the bottom to allow the chemical to go as deep as the termites have worked. The holes in the trench should be spaced at intervals of about 18 inches.

AMOUNT OF CHEMICAL TO USE is at least 1 gallon to each 5 cubic feet of soil to be treated. For example, 5 gallons of solution is the minimum quantity necessary to treat a trench 1 foot wide, 2½ feet deep, and 10 feet long.

APPLY THE CHEMICAL by pouring or sprinkling a portion on the bottom of the trench. Then add a layer of soil about 6 inches thick and more chemical. Next mix the chemical thoroughly with the soil and tamp well. Repeat these operations until the trench is filled.

CAUTION.—The chemicals mentioned herein are in varying degrees poisonous to man and explosive and should be handled with due caution. Mixing should be done outdoors.

For a complete discussion of termite control measures, see United States Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin No. 1911, Preventing Damage to Buildings by Subterranean Termites and Their Control.

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